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Allergic contact dermatitis from dioctyl maleate in a moisturiser
I. Chan and S.H. Wakelin

A 62-year-old woman presented with a two-year history of severe intermittent facial dermatitis associated with an itchy, burning sensation and oedema. Each episode lasted 3 days and resolved with desquamation after 2 weeks. There was no history of atopy. Patch testing to the British Contact Dermatitis Society standard series, a cosmetic series and her own cosmetics revealed a positive (+) reaction to a popular brand of moisturiser. Further patch testing to individual ingredients of the moisturising lotion showed a strong positive (++) to dioctyl maleate (2%, 5% and 10% pet.). Only two previous cases of allergic contact dermatitis to dioctyl maleate have been reported so far. Dioctyl maleate is a synthetic lipophilic diester produced by reacting caprylic alcohol and maleic acid. Cosmetically, it imparts a silky, non-greasy feel and is used as an emollient in various skin and hair care products such as cleansers, moisturisers, eye shadows, sunscreens and hair relaxers. In industry, it is categorised as a plasticiser and used in emulsion type paints, paper, textile coating, adhesives and oil additives. It is also used in surfactants and wetting agents. Given the widespread use of this agent, particularly in cosmetics, it is likely that more cases of allergic contact dermatitis due to dioctyl maleate will be seen in future and it should be considered for inclusion for in cosmetic test series.

Significance and relevance of positive patch test to fragrance mix
M.L. Chandeleier, F. Weber-Muller, C. Beaumann, J.F. Cuny, J.L. Schmutz and A. Barbaud

Objectives: To determine the significance and relevance of positive patch-test to Fragrance Mix (FM+) and to evaluate for the first time its cutaneous or mucous relevance.

Material and methods: Two unicentric and prospective studies, including 112 patients with a FM+ and 468 patients having had an allergical assessment with the standard series of patch tests, who answered a self-questionnary.

Results: From the two studies, 88% of the FM+’s patients indicated an intolerance to the perfumes with cutaneous (62%), ORL (20%) or mixed signs (18%). The association between positive test with Balsam of Peru and FM+ was significant.

The economic impact of occupational contact dermatitis in Australia
S. Colgan, A. Lee, R. Carter and R. Nixon

It is widely reported that there is a significant social and economic impact of occupational contact dermatitis (OCD), although there have been very few published studies. Mathias (1985) reported from the USA while Rosen and Freeman performed an estimate of Australian costs in 1992. The Health Economics Group of the Program Evaluation Unit at the University of Melbourne in association with the Occupational Dermatology Research and Education Centre, undertook to describe the health sector resources involved in the prevention and management of OCD in Australia and the associated productivity losses. Incidence and prevalence of OCD were based on the SPOT study which we have previously reported, using rates of 20 and 35 cases/100 000 workers respectively. It would now seem that previous estimates of the cost of the disease may have overestimated the economic impact of the disease. Fortunately, changes in recent years involving workplace health and safety legislation, strategies aimed at preventing OCD and an increasing emphasis on maintaining the productivity of workers while reducing costs, appear to have combined to effectively reduce the incidence and severity of OCD and associated productivity losses. However, there are substantial ongoing costs experienced with the development of persistent post-occupational dermatitis where people are unable to work and require long term treatment. Using a model specifically developed to include appropriate and accurate costings, we will present estimates of the impact of OCD in Australia.

Cosmetic and fragrance allergy in the UK

Cosmetic and fragrance allergy is common but may vary between countries. In this study we examined patch testing results from a number of UK centres for 2004 and 2005. A retrospective study of the data from the British Contact Dermatitis Society (BCDS) pooled database was performed to analyse cosmetic and fragrance allergen patch test results from nine contact dermatitis units. Results revealed 6478 patients were patch tested to the British standard series and 2018 to the BCDS cosmetic series in 2004 and 2005. The three commonest cosmetic or fragrance allergen patch test results from the BCDS standard series were fragrance mix I 467/6465 (7.2%) with 361 (5.6%) considered of current or past relevance, and 106 (1.6%) unknown relevance; balsam of Peru 409/ 6470 (6.3%) with 269 (4.2%) considered of current or past relevance and 140 (2.2%) unknown relevance; paraphenylenediamine (PPD) 229/6474 (3.5%) with 189 (2.9%) of current or past relevance and 40 (0.6%) unknown relevance. The seven commonest allergens from the BCDS cosmetic battery in 2004 and 2005 were Amerchol L101 36/2018 (1.8%), cocamidopropyl betaine 28/2018 (1.4%), propolis 24/2018 (1.2%), glyceryl monothioglycolate 23/2018 (1.1%), abitol 23/2018 (1.1%), toluenesulphonamide formaldehyde resin 20/2018 (1%) and oleamidopropyl dimethylamine 16/2018 (0.8%). The pooled data from this large number of patients confirms that fragrances are the most frequently recorded allergens. Five allergens in the BCDS cosmetic series were recorded as showing >1% positivity, demonstrating the value of testing for additional allergens in selected patients. Repeating this analysis in the future will allow evaluation of emerging allergens.

Allergic contact dermatitis in children

Allergic contact dermatitis (ACD) in childhood is no longer considered a rare occurrence with reports of prevalence varying from 13.3% to 27%. The aim of this study was to examine the results of patch testing in children from a number of UK centres. A retrospective study of the data from the British Contact Dermatitis Society (BCDS) pooled database was performed to